

AIMING FOR TOP LINE GROWTH IN A MATURE MARKET

ABOUT ELECTROSWITCH ELECTRONIC PRODUCTS. Electrosch Electronic Products, established in 1986 as a business unit of Electro Switch Corporation, designs and manufactures industry leading, intelligent solutions for switching and controlling electrical circuits. Their solutions can be found in a wide array of products.

THE CHALLENGE. Although Electrosch was an established organization in a mature market with a strong brand, industry reputation and market share, Kyle Martin, Vice President and General Manager of the business unit, wanted to improve top-line growth and increase revenues.

“Our goal was to reconfigure some office space to bring product development, sales and marketing into a co-located, collaborative work environment. We felt if we could build a degree of seamlessness among those three groups, we’d be at a good starting point to achieve top-line growth,” said Martin. “We turned to Industry Expansion Solutions (IES), administrator for the North Carolina Manufacturing Extension Partnership (NCMEP), for assistance from their Industrial Engineering group, utilizing their customized, student design project solution.”

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. A group of NC State University students, under the direction of the IES Industrial Engineering program manager, got to work right away. “They came into our plant and measured the proposed office space targeted for the reconfiguration. They spent time talking to the intended user groups to understand their requirements and business needs for collaboration. And then, they went back to the university and performed their magic. Six weeks later, the students returned with multiple space planning options. They presented their ideas, down to paint color selections, to key Electrosch stakeholders. What began as a big idea...a flash of insight had been transformed into detailed drawings.

“The student design ideas were sound; the drawings—well done,” said Martin. “As we engaged with the students during the ideation discussion, we ultimately discovered we didn’t need to reconfigure the space.”

A Seed is Planted

“For a time, we believed a collaborative workspace was the only way to boost innovation and creativity,” said Martin. “Because of the process, we discovered some of the best insight comes from things as simple as hallway discussions.”

Electrosch discovered great collaboration is not just about groups of people physically working side-by-side. It requires introspection and the discussion of new ideas and new approaches. IES helped plant the seed and the flower “bloomed” as Electrosch engaged in customer discovery. Sales met face-to-face with prospects to explore potential new markets and application uses. They eliminated market segments and added new ones. They reduced response time to customer inquiries.

RESULTS



\$220K top line growth attributed to a maniacal focus on new customers’ needs



\$1.2M in retained sales attributed recapturing inactive customers through engaged customer discovery



\$250K invested in a web-based configurator enabling customers to configure their own unique products



\$30K investment in electronic interfaces, updated content and marketing collaterals

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